



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Advances Transparency Again, Creates “Ask Finance” Website

New online resource allows public to ask direct questions of Finance Department, get answers

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside, which recently created a new transparency portal designed to help residents learn more about their government, is adding another option for residents specifically interested in financial information.

The City Council’s Finance Committee, at a special committee meeting Tuesday (7/29) evening, reviewed an online “Ask Finance” portal that they requested be created at their June meeting in order for citizens to have their questions about City finances answered directly by Finance Department staff.

Answers to questions submitted at the website -- <http://riversideca.gov/finance/ask-finance/> -- will be posted by the Finance Department staff as soon as they can be researched and addressed. Visitors to the site also will be able to submit documents along with their questions. Finance staff will be able to provide supporting information when answering questions.

“This new ‘Ask Finance’ portal will be a great way for residents with questions about City finances to get answers in a timely and efficient manner,” said City Councilman Jim Perry, chairman of the Council’s Finance Committee. “It also will provide our staff with a centralized location to receive and respond to requests for information from the public.”

The City Council’s Finance Committee will review all questions and answers quarterly at their regular meeting, beginning in September 2014. Citizens can attend those meetings to ask follow-up questions as well.

The Finance Department also already provides cutting-edge access to financial information, including monthly financial reports, investor relations information, and, most recently, the City’s online checkbook and budget tool powered by OpenGov. All of these user-friendly tools are available at <http://riversideca.gov/finance/>.

Residents can pull public records on any topic at www.EngageRiverside.com, the citywide transparency portal unveiled early this month. They also can gather information by reading the City budget and/or financial statements and through Public Records Act requests.

The “Ask Finance” website, however, enables interested citizens to submit detailed questions directly to the Finance Department.

“I’m proud of our ongoing effort to increase the public’s access to information about how City government works,” City Manager Scott Barber said. “The more people know about how their government works, the more likely and able they are to participate in the process of building a better Riverside.”